

ideally within the State Department, with the sole mandate of working with foreign countries and others to mitigate the international impact of global climate change. During my tenure in Congress, I have witnessed how the designation of an office within the State Department has bolstered efforts on a single critical issue with notable results within a short time period. This has been the case, for example, with the Office to Monitor and Combat Trafficking in Persons as created by P.L. 108–193, my legislation the Trafficking Victims Protection Act. Similarly, I know that the establishment of an Office on Global Climate Change at the ambassadorial level within the State Department as provided for in H.R. 3221 will demonstrate to the world that the United States is targeting needed resources to address this challenge and is completely engaged in the worldwide fight against global warming.

Title II of H.R. 3221 also creates an International Clean Energy Foundation to serve the long-term foreign policy and energy security goals of reducing global greenhouse gas emissions. The foundation will be charged with promoting programs that serve as models for significantly reducing emissions through clean and efficient energy technologies, processes and services. The creation of the International Clean Energy Foundation promises to add a particularly effective tool in our arsenal against adverse climate change.

Mr. Chairman, global warming continues to be one of the most pressing environmental concerns in the world today. Given sea level rise, the increasing severity of storm surges and continued warming temperatures, the impact of global climate change is undeniable. Unless we act now—the future possesses an even greater threat to our way of life on this planet.

With its incorporation of H.R. 2420, H.R. 3221 represents an important step—both domestically and internationally—in reducing our dependence on fossil fuels and promoting 21st century clean energy solutions. Legislative action by this Congress to promote investment in renewable energy development, availability and implementation will help ensure a healthy environment. I urge my colleagues to support H.R. 3221.

Mr. UDALL of Colorado. I strongly support this amendment. . . .

I'd like to thank my cousin, Representative TOM UDALL, as well as Representative PLATTS and the rest of our colleagues who have worked so hard to push forward a renewable electricity standard. Speaker PELOSI also deserves our deep gratitude for her support and for working side by side with us during these last few weeks. We all understand the importance of this critical amendment, and I'm proud to have been a longstanding part of this great effort as it culminates in a vote today.

As demand for energy continues to grow in this country, we need to make sure that we continue to have affordable and reliable supplies. And, most importantly, as we move to more competition in the delivery of electricity, we must make sure that the environment and consumers are protected.

So it makes sense to put incentives in place to ensure that less polluting and environmentally friendly sources of energy can find their way into the marketplace. And that's what a renewable electricity standard, or RES, would help to do.

But it's not just about doing the right thing for the environment.

With almost all new electricity generation the last decade fueled by natural gas, our domestic supply cannot sustain our needs. Iran, Russia, and Qatar together hold 58 percent of the world's natural gas reserves. As demand for power continues to grow, we shouldn't be forced to rely on these unstable regions to sustain our economy, nor do we have to.

The best way to decrease our vulnerability and dependence on foreign energy sources is to diversify our energy portfolio. Half of the States in our great Union have already figured this out and have made the commitment to producing a percentage of their electricity using renewable energy. But all of our States will benefit under a national standard, which will bring natural gas costs down nationwide, create new economies of scale in manufacturing and installation, and offer greater predictability to long-term investors.

The Udall-Platts amendment requires utilities nationwide to produce 15 percent of their electricity using renewable energy sources by 2020. The amendment also allows up to 4 percent of that 15 percent requirement to be met with energy efficiency.

The amendment's definition of renewables is broad, including biomass—cellulosic organic materials; plant or algal matter from agricultural crops, crop byproducts, or landscape waste; gasified animal waste and landfill gas, or biogas; and all types of crop-based liquid fuels. It includes incremental hydropower; solar and solar water heating; wind; ocean, ocean thermal and tidal; geothermal; and distributed generation. The amendment also allows energy efficiency to make up 27 percent of a utility's targeted requirement. Every State has one or more of these resources.

The Udall-Platts amendment saves consumers billions of dollars. By reducing the cost of new clean technologies and making them more available, it will help restrain natural gas price increases by creating more competition for those fuels.

The Udall-Platts amendment will spur economic development in the form of billions of dollars in new capital investment and in new property tax revenues for local communities, and millions of dollars in new lease payments to farmers and rural landowners.

Not least, the Udall-Platts amendment will reduce air pollution from dirty fossil-fueled power plants that threaten public health and our climate.

The amendment does not burden some regions of the country at the expense of others, as the utilities would have you believe. It creates public benefits for all.

The argument that the Southeast is disadvantaged by the RES—that the Southeast has no renewable resources—ignores the plain truth. In fact, the Southeast is one of the regions of the country that will see the most benefit from this proposal. According to Department of Energy's Energy Information Administration, the technology that does best under a 15 percent RES is biomass. Already, 2500 megawatts of generation come from biomass in the Southeast, and much of the waste from pulp and paper mills is not being used to generate electricity.

The Udall-Platts amendment gives States flexibility in achieving the standard.

Under the amendment, states can borrow credits against future renewables generation—for up to three years as long as they are repaid by 2020, which means the effective start

date can be delayed and facilities ramped up more slowly.

The amendment gives three renewable energy credits for each kilowatt hour of power generated at on-site eligible facilities used to offset part or all of the customer's requirements. This means solar, small wind, and other distributed energy generation sources used in residential and business locations can earn triple credits.

The amendment also returns money to the States from alternative compliance payments for State weatherization programs, low-income energy assistance programs, and for encouraging the installation of additional renewables.

The amendment also lowers the initial target date for 2010 to 2.75 percent and makes the escalation to 15 percent more gradual so that utilities have more time to ramp-up renewable energy sales.

In summary, this renewable electricity standard will reduce harmful air and water pollution, provide a sustainable, secure energy supply now, and will create new investment, income and jobs in communities all over the country.

It is good for the environment, good for the economy, and good for our country. I strongly urge its adoption.

Mr. GRIJALVA. Mr. Chairman, I rise today in support of H.R. 3221.

This bill is a package of important provisions that will move our energy and climate policies toward a more sustainable future. I strongly urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

One of the highlights of this bill is a provision to require royalty payments from oil and gas leases that currently are exempt from royalties. We are losing millions of dollars on these faulty leases that are allowing oil and gas companies to extract taxpayer-owned resources for free. Putting a stop to this is fiscally unsound public policy is a much-needed step in the right direction.

With this measure, we will also establish progressive and sensible policies designed to help families and businesses save energy with new efficiency standards for appliances, lighting and buildings.

This bill puts our priorities back on track in funding new research into renewable fuels, which could be unlimited sources of clean energy if we invest in them properly. This will begin to move us away from the antiquated, dirty sources of energy we use today.

I support this bill and plan to vote in favor of it. I am, however, disappointed that several important provisions were removed from the Natural Resources Committee bill, H.R. 2337, as it was being incorporated into this bill. The colleagues who demanded the removal are primarily from big oil producing states whose interest is to move that product for the corporate interests they represent without thought or consideration for the rights of other Western states, communities, ranchers, farmers and the shared public lands of the American people.

One gentleman in particular represents a vast oil producing district with no real public land, at least 100 hazardous waste sites, numerous former superfund sites, watershed and ground water contamination sites. Perhaps the gentleman feels that is the price of doing the oil industry's business? I and many others in the West prefer a different scenario—where study, consultation, protection of our public lands, public participation, and cost recovery for the tax payer—are an integral part of doing business.